

Appl. No. 09/933,285
Amdt. dated December 19, 2005
Reply to Office Action of September 28, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 4-6, and 10-12 as follows:

1. (currently amended): A method for managing the submission of ideas in an business organization, comprising:
 - (a) collecting ideas extracted from a plurality of sources including ideas submitted through an idea submission tool and extracted from a knowledge management system utilized to look for field based development opportunities that can be leveraged into solution deliverables;
 - (b) entering-storing the collected ideas into an electronic archive accessible through a network;
 - (c) selectively displaying the stored ideas to members of the organization so that the members of the organization can provide additional thoughts to the submission;
 - (d) selectively providing the stored ideas to a management screening committee for screening; and
 - (e) submitting ideas-screened ideas by the management screening committee to an idea sponsor; and
 - (f) entering into an opportunity screening phase based on the idea sponsor's approval.
2. (currently amended): The method of claim 1, further including:

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appointing a process champion to ~~perform step (a)~~ to ensure that collected ideas receive expedient attention by the management screening committee.

3. (original): The method of claim 2, wherein step (b) further includes:
providing e-mail notification of idea submissions to the process champion and to a chairperson of a management screening committee.

4. (currently amended): The method of claim ~~[[3]] 1~~, ~~wherein step (b)~~ further ~~including~~:
convening a meeting of the management screening committee when justified by idea submission volume.

5. (currently amended): The method of claim 1, ~~wherein step (d)~~ further including:
performing exploratory research and development of ideas being screened by the management screening committee.

6. (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein step (a) includes:
publicizing the ~~system~~ method to all potential submitters;
planning and holding focus groups and brainstorming sessions to stimulate targeted ideas;
generating ideas within a management screening committee by combining ~~inputs~~ management committee evaluation and secondary research;
gathering information through conventions, trade shows, and customer visits;
~~using a knowledge management system to look for field-based development opportunities that can be leveraged into solution deliverables; and~~
implementing programs to collect individually submitted ideas.

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7. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein step (b) includes:
entering ideas into a web-based archive interface.
8. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein step (c) includes:
displaying submitted ideas on an idea submission website to other potential idea
submitters and to members of a management screening committee.
9. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein in step (d), the management
screening committee comprises a committee of experienced associates with varying perspectives
who screen submitted ideas periodically based on volume and priority of ideas.
10. (currently amended): The method of claim 1, ~~wherein in step (f) the opportunity
screening phase comprises the following steps~~ further including:
- (f1) assigning an idea selected by the idea sponsor to an idea owner for research and
for completion of process deliverables to convert the submitted idea into a concept;
 - (f2) contacting the idea submitter for additional input;
 - (f3) presenting concepts to the idea sponsor for ranking and evaluation;
 - (f4) presenting concepts selected by the idea sponsor to a resource board;
 - (f5) approving resources for concepts selected by the resource board.
11. (currently amended): A method for idea submission within an business
organization, comprising:
- (a) receiving an idea submission from an ~~idea S~~submitter and entering the idea
submission into a central database as an archive that is accessible by members of the
organization, the archive including ideas collected extracted from a plurality of sources including

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ideas submitted through an idea submission tool and extracted from a knowledge management system utilized to look for field based development opportunities that can be leveraged into solution deliverables, the archive including searchable fields and a status field indicating the status of the idea submission;

- (b) appointing a process champion and a technology evaluation committee chairperson for the idea submission;
 - (c) notifying the process champion and the technology evaluation committee chairperson of the idea submission;
 - (d) convening a technology evaluation committee to evaluate the idea submission;
 - (e) referring the idea submission, ~~if upon found~~finding the idea submission to be promising by the technology evaluation committee, to an appropriate business group vice president for review and for acceptance or deferral;
 - (f) communicating review results to the idea shop process champion;
 - (g) updating the status of the idea submission in the database;
 - (h) notifying the idea submitter of the status of the idea submission;
 - (i) ~~if upon~~ the business group vice president ~~chooses~~ing to sponsor the submitted idea, appointing an idea owner to research the idea and to convert the idea into a concept;
 - (j) ~~if upon~~ the business solution group vice president ~~approves~~ing the concept, presenting the idea to a resource board for a concept phase decision point review;
 - (k) deciding whether or not to fund subsequent developmental phases for the idea;
- and

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(l) entering all supporting research, evaluations and presentations into the archive.

12. (currently amended): A system for submitting ideas within an business organization, comprising:

a network of personal computers, the network including a central network server computer having a web-based interface, an application interface, and a central idea archive database system,

each personal computer in the network ~~being capable of~~ operable of displaying a display screen for receiving inputs from an idea submitter,

the central idea archive database system including an electronic archive of all submitted ideas extracted from a plurality of sources including ideas submitted through an idea submission tool and extracted from a knowledge management system utilized to look for field based development opportunities that can be leveraged into solution deliverables, the archive being accessible at the personal computers in the network, the archive being searchable by keyword for enabling related ideas to be combined at a subsequent time.

13. (original): The system of claim 12, wherein the display screen includes data input boxes for receiving inputs from an idea submitter.

14. (original): The system of claim 13, wherein the data input boxes include an idea title box for receiving the title of an idea, an idea category box for receiving an input identifying a category for the submitted idea, a box for receiving an input identifying related current offers, solutions, or programs, a target industry box for receiving an input identifying a

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target industry for the submitted idea, an idea summary box for receiving a summary of the submitted idea, and a box for receiving a description of a problem solved by the submitted idea.

Please add the following new claims.

15. (new): The system of claim 12 further comprising:
a knowledge management system, the central idea archive database system accessible to all business units through the knowledge management system.
16. (new): The system of claim 15 wherein the knowledge management system enables a user of the system to link into information tracked as part of an overall business model.